REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 4-6 and 23-43 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1-3 and 7-22 are canceled, and new claims 23-43 are added. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

At the outset, Applicant appreciates the indication in the Office Action that claims 4-6 are allowable. New claims 23-25 are similar to claims 4-6, but do not invoke 35 U.S.C. §112, sixth paragraph.

New claim 26 is directed to a reciprocating engine comprising first and second ring grooves disposed adjacent to each other in a reciprocating direction of a piston and formed in a side surface of said piston, said first ring groove being located between a head end face of said piston and said second ring groove in the reciprocating direction, a first piston ring fitted in said first ring groove adjacent to the head end face of said piston, a second piston ring fitted in said second ring groove, a partition to partition a space between said first and second piston rings into a thrust side space and an anti-thrust side space; and communicating structure to allow the thrust side space to communicate with a combustion chamber defined by an inner surface of a cylinder and said head end face of said piston, said communicating structure having a plurality of communicating passages provided in said inner surface of said cylinder, being adapted to allow the thrust side space to communicate with said combustion chamber through said plurality of communicating passages when said piston is located in a vicinity of a top dead center, each said communicating passage being comprised of a recessed portion formed in said inner surface of said cylinder. With this structure, the communicating passages can introduce the combustion gas from the gas chamber to the thrust side space therethrough when the piston is located in a vicinity of top dead center. Moreover, it is possible to prevent the combustion chamber from communicating with the thrust side space through the plurality of communicating passages when

the piston is located out of the vicinity of top dead center. Thus, it is possible to maintain the piston in a gas flow state.

Bando (U.S. Patent No. 5,265,565) does not teach or suggest this subject matter. For example, Bando does not teach communicating structure including a plurality of communication passages provided in an inner surface of the cylinder, and being adapted to allow the thrust side space to communicate with the combustion chamber through the plurality of communicating passages when the piston is located in a vicinity of top dead center, each of the communicating passages being comprised of a recessed portion formed in the inner surface of the cylinder.

Watanabe et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,894,824) also does not teach this subject matter, and nor was it relied upon for such.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all the claims are patentable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, she is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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